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Prevalence and Impact of Demographic Factors and on University Students' Intentions, Attitudes and Aspects Regarding Marital Relationships

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is one of the most significant social institutions, which influence emotional, psychological, and cultural life of people. In the case of the university students who are at the threshold stage between adolescence and adulthood, marital intent, attitudes, and aspects come into play as major determinants of future social roles and family life. The current research analyzes the status of intent, attitude, and aspects of marital relationships among the university students. The purpose of the study was to find prevalence and impact of demographic factors on intent, attitude and aspects regarding marital relationships among university students. The sample included 500 participants (250 males, 250 females) from the age group of 18-30 years old. The study used the Intent to Marry Scale, the General Attitude towards Marriage Scale, and the Aspects of Marriage Scale (Park & Rosén, 2013) to collect data from the participants. Descriptive analysis and Neural network were analyzed to check the results. Findings of the results show that over half of the group (54.4%) demonstrated average feelings about marriage (192- 219), with 22% recording low (<192) and 23.8% recording high (>219) scores. Hence, about a quarter of the students show high intent, attitudes and aspects of marriage relationship. The greatest factors in prediction of intent, attitude and aspects regarding marital relationships were family system (100% normalized importance) followed by education (72% normalized importance), marital status (41.6% normalized importance), age (34.7% normalized importance), social economic status (32.7% normalized importance), and gender (10.8% normalized importance).

Introduction

The desire of young people to marry, the attitude to marriage, and the aspects of marital relations have been given more and more attention by researchers in recent years as they determine the family life in the future. Intent to marry is a personal choice or the likelihood of an individual getting married, and this is typically based on personal assumptions, culture, and the perceived prospects (Guzzo, 2020). Marriage attitude is an indicator of whether an individual has a positive or negative perception of marriage, including perceptions about its value, its good or bad aspects, and attitudes are influential in determining what people decide to do with marriage (Sonkaya, 2024). Marriage Aspects include the expectations of an individual about marriage (Park & Rosen, 2013). At the same time, it fore see issues related to marital relationships explain the specifics and demands within the marriage, including intimacy, communication, trust, respect and responsibilities, which define the quality and the durability of marriage life (Kamali, 2020). These three variables combined form a full picture of what people in contemporary society think, prepare to, and evaluate marriage.

Marriage has become one of the most basic social institutions offering emotional, social and economic security, particularly needed in collectivist societies such as Pakistan, which consider the practices tradition to be a cultural and religious imperative. We can now see that because of modernization, globalization and education the views of young adults towards marriage are shifting towards a point of negotiation between personal wants versus family demands (Cherlin, 2020).

Whether a person is ready to get married or not, as portrayed by marital intent, depends on things such as personal maturity and social conventions, especially in South Asian societies whereby arranged marriages are the norm (Asim et al., 2024). Ambivalence tends to be quite common among university students between academic goals of career and self-identity and the conventional demands on family and community (Tabkhi et al., 2025).

The attitudes towards relationship in marriage are culturally and religiously created, especially the Islamic basis of marriage learned in Pakistan and focusing on marital commitment, family acceptance and social prestige (Bashir et al., 2024). Such aspects as equality, emotional intimacy become more preferable in students, but they also struggle with the demands of society and gender roles, as well as security in terms of financial well-being (Nejatian et al., 2022). This is the phase of transition between adolescence and adulthood where the students in universities get the opportunity to discover their independence, even as they discover themselves; all too frequently they are tied to cultural values (Noori et al., 2021).

Research on the views of Pakistani students on marriage provides a much-needed insight into the social reality of the society that changes over time. It notifies the policy-makers of the difficulties that young adults experience and helps the family counselors meet the issues connected with the ideas what happens to personal hopes and desires and what is expected by the family (Akbari et al., 2019). Nevertheless, an existing research gap exists concerning the marital intention, attitude and aspects of university students, and this study aims to fill the existing gap, adding both to the scholarly literature and to the overall knowledge of modern marriage dynamics by identifying the prevalence and demographic factors involve in intent, attitude and aspects of marital relationship.

There are various risk factors that influence the attitude and choices of university students on marriage. Unemployment and high cost of living are some of the biggest factors that make one delay marriage (Noori et al., 2021). Culture or religious beliefs, as well as family pressure, are strong influencing factors in shaping the pressure that students feel to either have an early or late marriage (Tabassum et al., 2025). These decisions further changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic as some students are delaying education and marriage, and some students are getting married the earliest because of family and social pressures

(Razi et al., 2021). According to research findings in such countries as Pakistan, students experience a strain because, on the one hand, they want to follow their own ambitions and graduate after successfully completing their higher education, and, on the other hand, they are caused to follow their families' traditional norms that promote early marriage (Tabassum et al., 2025). Consequently, the rate of immediate marital intent is usually low among the university students and yet the chances of getting married in the future are very high.

Marriage is a major factor which shapes the social identity of the young adults, although when it occurs varies depending on how old they are in various regions around the world. National norms influence prevalence of marriage among students of the university age group (18-24 years). In the developed nations marriages usually take a long time and symptom of average first marriage in both women and men are 30 and 32 respectively and this leads to 5-7 percentage of the students in the university are married (Razi et al 2021). In Pakistan, on the other hand, approximately 18-20 of women are married before the age of 18, nearly 30-35 by age 24, thus the estimates are of 15-20 out of 100,000 women entering marriage, meaning that nearly 15-20% of female students are married (Rahman et al., 2024). The literature of qualitative study reveals marriage students with their own pressing problems, whenever 12-18 percent of the surveyed were married, especially the women (Fallahchai et al., 2019). This is in sharp contrast to the western world where under 5% of students are married (Sadeghian et al., 2025). Consequently, cultural influences based in Pakistan require cultural policies provide flexible time scheduling and supportive resources to the married student group in the learning context, apart from the bit of flexibility, which support policies provide in academic settings for students regardless of the cultural setting in the world (Shahzadi et al., 2025).

Significance of the Study

Research Gaps identified include that there are relatively few papers that have considered psychological constructs of marital attitudes in Pakistan, not many studies have given attention to gender, socioeconomic influences, and influence of religion, culture, and modernization. The current research will seek to fill these gaps with respect to marital intent, attitudes, and aspects of marital relationship among university students.

This study is important because it assists in determining how university students view and treat marital relationships in Pakistan since they are the most educated youth in the country and the future decision-makers. Discovering their purpose, mindset, and other similar issues would be of significant interest in the shifting trends in society, culture, and how contemporary education shapes the conservative meaning and practice of marriage. The knowledge can guide educators, policymakers, and counselors to create awareness programs, guidance services, and policies that promote healthy relationships development, gender equality, and informed marital choices. Finally, the research is also associated with the reinforcement of family institution and social issues related to marriage in Pakistani society.

Literature Review

Theory on Planned Behavior (TPB) forms theoretical Frameworks as perceptions of marriage among these students according to perceived behavior control, attitudes, subjective norms, intentions created by attitude shape their marriage intentions (Ajzen, 1985). According to Social Exchange Theory, relationships are evaluated in terms of costs and benefits, which can apply to the group of university students, comparing marriage with emotional satisfaction, financial maturity, and social conventions and norms, where younger persons are inclined to the individual advantage compared to classic values (Homans, 1958; Blau, 2017). Student attitudes are complicated by cultural and religious pressures, especially in Pakistan, where Islamic teachings reinforce the association of marriage with companionship with other cultural practices concerning caste and the functions of parents (Tabassum et al., 2025).

In Western societies, Global Studies indicate trends of decrease in marriage rates as marriage is becoming a lifestyle, although students are postponing the idea of marriage until it is time

to attend school and achieve stability in life through marriage; and in all aspects, marriage is viewed as something that brings emotional intimacy and equality (Xie et al., 2022). In East Asia, economic pressures have been noted to cause declining levels of fertility and increased ages of marriage despite some traditional family expectations that remain influential in the region (Suryadi et al., 2022).

Within Marital Intent and Attitudes in South Asia, it is shown that in India, marriage is still a highly valued institution but is allowing more self-choice among the educated young people (Sonkaya et al., 2024). Bangladesh shows similarity in early marriage, other students in urban areas are education and career first (Ngo-Thi et al., 2022). Girls in Nepal are less intent to marry off (Hewitt & Churchill, 2022). Within Pakistan, due to the traditional point of view, marriage is not only a religious but a societal obligation that the family stands heavily on but with the trends that are beginning to appear the marriages are rather viewed of with self-selection and emotion compatibility and the speed of their education generates some influence on when they can get married (Afzal et al., 2022). Gender differences do show the dependence of males on financial autonomy relative to the dependence of females on education (Ren, 2022).

Social Economic and Cultural factors behave to unite and to lose urban students and to conform with tradition rural students (Fallahchai et al., 2021). Systems influence the decision to participate in marriage, in which joint family systems reflect greater family influence (Ms. Tamizarasi et al., 2022). The facts of Marital Relationships cover swelling significance of communication, emotion closeness, congruence of education, and economic preparedness that concern marriage (Saqquezi et al., 2020).

Objectives

- To investigate prevalence of Intent, Attitude and Aspects Regarding Marital Relationships among university students.
- To study the impact of demographic on Intent, Attitude and Aspects Regarding Marital Relationships among university students.

Method and Participants

A cross-sectional research design was used due to shortage of time to explore the prevalence and demographic impacts of intent, attitude and aspects of marital relationships among university students. A convenient sample of 500 students (250 males & 250 females) was taken from students of University of Gujrat.

Measures

In order to collect data, a self-built demographic sheet (gender, age, education, marital status, socioeconomic status and family system), along with the Intent to Marry Scale 3 items, General Attitudes Towards Marriage Scale 10-items and Aspect of Marriage Scale (Park & Rosen, 2013) 23-items was used (Park & Rosen, 2013; Prosser & Rosén, 2018). The participants were asked to rate on the Likert scale (0 strongly disagree to 6 Strongly Agree). The Cronbach alpha of the three scales were 0.91, 0.84 and 0.92 respectively. Further, all the three scales show moderate correlation with each other's hence confirming the construct validity (Prosser & Rosén, 2018).

Procedure

At first, the scales were organized and the author's permission was taken, for the data collection. Data was taken from students of University of Gujrat. Before giving a questionnaire to students, they were told about the objectives of the study and asked if they were willing to participate in the study. They were assured that their data will be used for research purposes only. Then, they were provided with the informed consent form along with the demographic sheet, Intent to Marry Scale, General Attitudes towards Marriage Scale and Aspect of Marriage Scale (Park & Rosen, 2013). Queries of students were being answered if

they were confused about any statement in the questionnaires and they were made sure that their responses will be kept confidential.

Ethical considerations

All ethical guidelines were practiced throughout the research course and progression. Concerned authorities were contacted accordingly for permission to conduct research. Through written consent form, willingness of the participants was obtained to participate in the current study. They were assured their information would be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purpose.

Date Analysis

For data analysis, IBM statistics SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 21) was used to compute descriptive statistics and neural network.

Results

In order to interpret the data descriptive statistics and neural network was applied. Percentages, means and standard deviations of demographic variables and characteristics were calculated by using descriptive statistics.

Table 1

Summary of socio-demographic and clinical characteristics of the entire sample.

Variables	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Male	250	50
Female	250	50
Age of Participants		
19 - 21	214	42.8
22 - 25	228	45.6
26 - 30	58	11.6
Education		
BS	410	82
MS	90	18
Marital Status		
Married	137	27.4
Unmarried	363	72.6
Family System		
Nuclear	280	44
Joint	220	56
Socio Economic Status		
Lower	136	27.2
Middle	278	55.6
Upper	86	17.2

N=500

Table 2

Descriptive analysis (Percentiles) of the current sample. N=500

Percentiles	Level	Frequency	Percentage%
25 th	Less than 192 scores	109	22
50 th	192 – 219 scores	272	54.4
75 th	Above than 219 scores	119	23.8

Table 2 indicates the intent, attitudes and aspects of marriage along with high, moderate and low level. The percentile table indicates the scores of three levels. 22% of students reported

less than 192 score whereas 54.4% i.e., majority scores lies between 192 and 219. Meanwhile, 23.8% scored higher than 219. This indicated that 23.8% of the students show high intent, attitudes and aspects of marriage relationship.

Table 3

Predictor Association among Variables

Relative Error	
Training	Testing
.750	.751

Table 3 indicated relative error of training and testing. The lesser the difference between the relative errors the model is said to be established. Here the difference is only .001 confirming that demographic variables have normalized importance on intent, attitudes and aspects of marriage relationship.

Table 4

Predictive Importance of Independent Factors

Variable	Importance	Normalized Importance
Age	.119	34.7%
Gender	.037	10.8%
Education	.247	72.0%
Family System	.343	100.0%
Marital Status	.143	41.6%
Socioeconomic Status	.112	32.7%

The most important factors in predicting the outcome are indicated in the table 4. The most important is family system (100%), which is why it has an impressive influence on the results. There is also education (72%), and marital status (41.6%). There is moderate impact on age and socioeconomic status and least on gender. In general, family system and education are the strongest predictors as compared to other variables. It can be seen graphically in figure 1.

Figure 1: Normalized Importance of Independent Variables

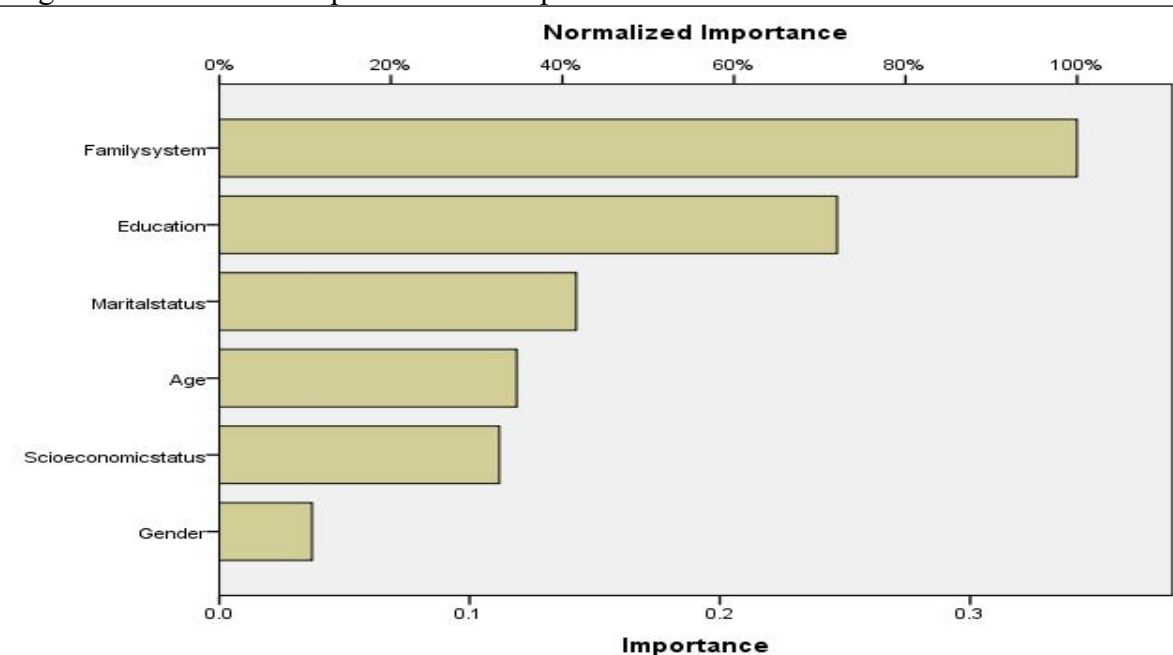


Figure 2 shows the importance of demographic variables in predicting outcome. Family system and education has a higher importance value as compared to other variables that means it play a bigger role in the model's prediction. The bar chart is normalized and it show their relative significance.

Discussion

The research brings significant understanding of the demographic with predictive values in attitudes and intentions to marry. The majority of the respondents scored at moderate level on the intent, attitudes and aspects scale. A percentage of 22% lies at a score of 192 and below. Finally 23.8% of students show high in intent, attitudes and aspects of marriage relationship. Here, a research conducted in Pakistan shown the intent, attitude and aspect prevalence separately. 82.6% individuals show high intention of marriage and 84.7% demonstrated positive attitude towards marriage. Instantly approximately 100% want respect and trust wordiness followed by intimacy and money that were less important (Rahman, et al., 2024).

The training and testing relative error values was 0.750 and 0.751, as there is less difference in the two it indicate that demographic predicted the intent, attitude and aspects of marriage relationship among university students. The family system has proven to be the most important predictor (100% normalized importance). Here family system was most frequently used in influencing the intent, attitude aspects of marriage relationship. Family plays a central role in the Pakistani society where people make marriage decisions that represent common values (Shahzadi et al., 2025). The members of a joint family are highly influenced by elders and burdened by the responsibility that facilitates decision-making in groups. These findings are supported by a study which reveals that young adults raised in cohesive family structures have more positive attitudes towards marriage than their peers raised in fragmented families (Rahman et al., 2024). Although the joint family setup may reduce individual autonomy, it may also be a source of much-needed social support and marriage may be easier to access (Razi et al., 2021).

The second predictor that presented remarkably strong was education (72%). Education increases awareness, decision and broad fulfils perceptions regarding marriage compatibility. Research in Malakand showed that women were empowered by education and could thus make more healthy marriage negotiation decisions (Bashir et al., 2024; Tabassum et al., 2025). Other new trends observed in the international arena are that the higher the education, the later the marriage and the higher the demands to be equal (Xie et al., 2022).

Marital status also predictive at 3rd level the intent, attitude and aspects of marriage (41.6%). Married people were more likely to concrete attitudes based on experience, whereas unmarried people tended to experience ambitions driven by their culture. Studies show that the newly married couples view marriage as stabilizing as opposed to the ambivalence levels cited by the young individuals who have not been married (Suryadi et al., 2022).

Further, in case of age and socioeconomic status it was revealed that the young participants held idealized views about marriage than the older one. It is clear here that because of their life experiences the old ones were more realistic in their analysis. A study conducted in Sindh showed that higher-class people would postpone marriages in favor of studying, but lower-income people were more likely to marry at an earlier age (Afzal et al., 2022). So, marriage is an important institution that is therefore affected by the socioeconomic backgrounds (Tabassum et al., 2025).

The least significant predictor (10.8% normalized importance) was gender as opposition to the traditional form of gender roles in South Asia where the role designated to each gender plays a vital part in establishing marital expectations. The fact that gender norms are shifting in urban environments is indicative of a shift in opinion between men and women of cities, which signifies the victory of culture (Fallahchai et al., 2019). Family systems do not just

approve the choices made by married couples, but they may even coerce them as we have seen in their values of watta satta and child marriage. Although family support is advantageous, it likewise has several disadvantages and is antagonistic to individualism (Akbari et al., 2019). Compared to family norms in international settings, higher personal freedom in the sphere of choosing a partner is the sharp opposite (Nejatian et al., 2022).

These findings have indicated the need to focus on encouraging family systems by promoting healthy marital attitudes as well as increasing education levels. To eliminate issues of contravention in the decision package of marital options, counseling programs should create intergenerational dialogue. Policymakers must pay attention to education to strengthen the independence of women and to decrease practices that are damaging in regard to marriage.

Conclusion

The current research was conducted to identify the prevalence and impact of demographic factors on intent, attitude and aspects of marital relationship. The finding indicated that about 23% of the students show high intent, attitude and aspects of marital relationships. Family system and education was considered as important factor in intent, attitude and aspects of marital relationship.

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